

# Defending Baghdad

## Iraqi PM Puts Focus On Capital

BY HAMZA HENDAWI AND QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA  
Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is ready to concede, at least temporarily, the loss of much of Iraq to Sunni insurgents and is instead deploying the military's best-trained and equipped troops to defend Baghdad. Iraqi officials told The Associated Press Tuesday.

Shiite militias responding to a call to arms by Iraq's top cleric are also focused on protecting the capital and Shiite shrines, while Kurdish fighters have grabbed a long-coveted oil-rich city outside their self-ruled territory, ostensibly to defend it from the al-Qaida breakaway group. With Iraq's bitterly divided sects focused on self-interests, the situation on the ground is increasingly looking like the fractured state the Americans have hoped to avoid.

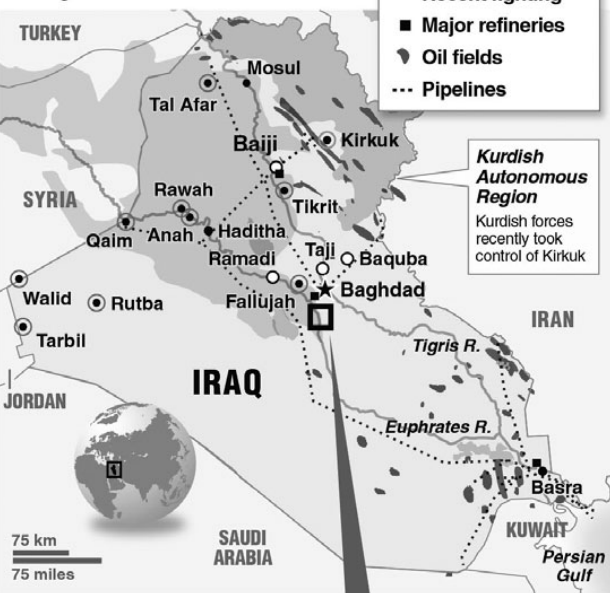
"We are facing a new reality and a new Iraq," the top Kurdish leader, Massoud Barzani, told U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Tuesday in Irbil, capital of the self-ruled Kurdish region in northern Iraq.

Two weeks after a series of disastrous battlefield setbacks in the north and west, al-Maliki is struggling to devise an effective strategy to repel the relentless advances by militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, a well-trained and mobile force thought to have some 10,000 fighters inside Iraq. The response by government forces has so far been far short of a counteroffensive, restricted mostly to areas where Shiites are in danger of falling prey to the Sunni extremists or around a major Shiite shrine north of Baghdad.

These weaknesses were

### ISIS moves south

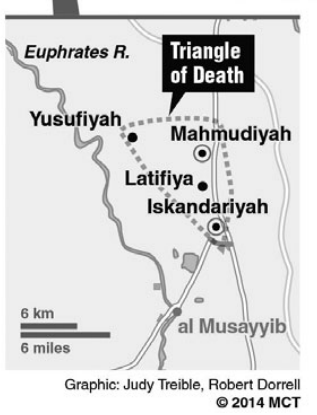
The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has taken key towns south of Baghdad, cutting it off from the Shiite south.



### ISIS in Triangle of Death

- Named Triangle of Death during the U.S. occupation; area saw major combat and sectarian violence, 2004-2007
- ISIS insurgents have taken two towns in the Triangle of Death that cut off Baghdad from the mainly Shiite south
- ISIS wants to create an Islamic enclave in the territory it now holds in Syria and Iraq

Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau, AP Reuters, The Long War Journal, Securing America's Future Energy



highlighted when the government tried but failed to retake Tal Afar, a mixed Shiite-Sunni city of some 200,000 that sits strategically near the Syrian border. The government claimed it had retaken parts of the city but the area remains under the control of the militants after a battle in which some 30 volunteers and troops were killed.

Government forces backed by helicopter gunships have also fought for a week to defend Iraq's largest oil refinery in Baiji, north of Baghdad, where a top military official said Tuesday that Sunni militants were regrouping for another push to capture the sprawling facility.

In the face of militant advances that have virtually erased Iraq's western border with Syria and captured territory on the frontier with Jordan, al-Maliki's focus has been the defense of Baghdad, a majority Shiite city of 7 million fraught with growing tension. The city's Shiites fear they could be massacred and the revered al-Kazimiyah shrine destroyed if Islamic State fighters capture Baghdad. Sunni residents also fear the extremists, as well as Shiite militiamen in the city, who they worry could turn against them.

The militants have vowed to march to Baghdad and the holy Shiite cities of Najaf and Karbala, a threat that prompted the nation's top

Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, to issue an urgent call to arms that has resonated with young Shiite men.

The military's best-trained and equipped forces have been deployed to bolster Baghdad's defenses, aided by U.S. intelligence on the militants' movements, according to the Iraqi officials, who are close to al-Maliki's inner circle and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss such sensitive issues.

The number of troops normally deployed in Baghdad has doubled, they said, but declined to give a figure. Significant numbers are defending the Green Zone, the sprawling area on the west bank of the Tigris River that is home to al-Maliki's office, as well as the U.S. Embassy. "Al-Maliki is tense. He is up working until 4 a.m. every day. He angrily ordered staff at his office to stop watching TV news channels hostile to his government," one of the officials said.

The struggle has prompted the Obama administration to send hundreds of troops back into Iraq, nearly three years after the American military withdrew.

The Pentagon said Tuesday that nearly half of the roughly 300 U.S. advisers and special operations forces are now on the ground in Baghdad, where they have begun to assess the Iraqi forces and the fight against Sunni militants. Another four teams of special forces will arrive in days, bringing the total to nearly 200.

Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Pentagon spokesman, also said the U.S. is conducting up to 35 surveillance missions daily over Iraq to provide intelligence as Iraqi troops battle the aggressive and fast-moving insurgency. About 90 of the U.S. troops are setting up a joint operations center in Baghdad.

Iraqi officials said the U.S. advisers were expected to focus on the better units the Americans had closely worked with before pulling out.

## Ukraine's Cease-Fire Thrown Into Peril

MOSCOW (AP) — The shaky cease-fire in Ukraine was thrown into peril Tuesday when pro-Moscow separatists shot down a Ukrainian military helicopter, killing nine servicemen.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko warned he may end the weeklong truce ahead of time. The deadly attack came a day after the rebels vowed to respect the cease-fire, which began last Friday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, played the peacemaker, urging Ukraine to extend the truce and sit down for talks with the rebels. He also moved to rescind a parliamentary resolution authorizing him to use the Russian military in Ukraine.

Poroshenko declared the cease-fire as part of a plan to end two months of fighting between government troops and pro-Russian insurgents in the east.

The violence, which erupted after the Kremlin's lightning annexation of Crimea in March, has left hundreds dead.

The cease-fire has been repeatedly broken by sporadic clashes, and it was violated again Tuesday when rebels used a shoulder-fired missile to down a helicopter in Slovyansk, a key flashpoint in the insurgency.

## West May Hit Russia With Sanctions

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and its European allies are finalizing a package of sanctions on Russia's key economic sectors that could be levied as early as this week, though the package might be delayed because of positive signals from Russian President Vladimir Putin, administration officials and others close to the decision-making said Tuesday.

Penalizing large swaths of the Russian economy, including its lucrative energy industry, would ratchet up the West's punishments against Moscow over its threatening moves in Ukraine. The U.S. and Europe have already sanctioned Russian individuals and entities, including some with close ties to Putin, but have so far stayed away from the broader penalties, in part because of concern from European countries that have close economic ties with Russia.

But with the crisis in Ukraine stretching on, a senior U.S. official said the U.S. and Europe are moving forward on "common sanctions options" that would affect several areas of the Russian economy. A Western diplomat said those options included Russia's energy industry, as well as Moscow's access to world financial markets.

The U.S. and Europe have been eyeing a European Council meeting in Brussels later this week as an opportunity to announce the coordinated sanctions. However, the enthusiasm for new sanctions, particularly among European leaders, appears to have waned in recent days as countries evaluate whether Putin plans to follow through on a series of promises that could ease the crisis, officials said.

The Russian leader acted Tuesday to rescind a parliamentary resolution authorizing him to use the Russian military in Ukraine. He also urged the new Ukrainian government to extend a weeklong cease-fire and called for talks between Ukraine and pro-Russian rebels that are widely believed to be backed by the Kremlin.

## 1 Convicted In Phone-Hacking Scandal

LONDON (AP) — It was a simple trick — punching in pass-codes to listen to messages left on other people's phones.

For years the illegal technique, known as phone hacking, helped Britain's *News of the World* tabloid get juicy stories about celebrities, politicians and royalty.

But the fallout eventually led to the shutdown of the country's best-selling newspaper, split Rupert Murdoch's powerful media empire and brought a storm of outrage down on the country's rambunctious press.

On Tuesday, the scandal brought a criminal conviction for former editor Andy Coulson on a charge of conspiring to hack phones — and an apology from Prime Minister David Cameron, who employed Coulson as his spin doctor.

Fellow *News of the World* editor Rebekah Brooks, a Murdoch protege who was the chief executive of his British newspaper operation, was acquitted of all charges, as were her husband and three other defendants.

## Methodist Panel Overturns Defrocking

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A Pennsylvania pastor who broke church law by presiding over his son's same-sex wedding ceremony and then became an outspoken activist for gay rights can return to the pulpit after a United Methodist Church appeals panel on Tuesday overturned a decision to defrock him.

The nine-person panel ordered the church to restore Frank Schaefer's pastoral credentials, saying the jury that convicted him last year erred when fashioning his punishment.

"I've devoted my life to this church, to serving this church, and to be restored and to be able to call myself a reverend again and to speak with this voice means so much to me," an exultant Schaefer told The Associated Press, adding he intends to work for gay rights "with an even stronger voice from within the United Methodist Church."

The church suspended Schaefer, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, for officiating his son's 2007 wedding, then defrocked him when he refused to promise to uphold the Methodist law book "in its entirety," including its ban on clergy performing same-sex marriages.

Schaefer appealed, arguing the decision was wrong because it was based on an assumption he would break church law in the future.

## Extremists Abduct 91 More In Nigeria

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP) — Extremists have abducted 91 more people, including toddlers as young as 3, in weekend attacks on villages in Nigeria, witnesses said Tuesday, providing fresh evidence of the military's failure to curb an Islamic uprising and the government's inability to provide security.

The kidnappings come less than three months after more than 200 schoolgirls were taken in a mass abduction that embarrassed Nigeria's government and military because of their slow response. Those girls are still being held captive.

The most recent victims included 60 girls and women, some of whom were married, and 31 boys, witnesses said. A local official confirmed the abductions, but security forces denied them.

There was no way to safely and independently confirm the report from Kummabza, 150 kilometers (95 miles) from Maiduguri, capital of Borno state and headquarters of a military state of emergency that has failed to curtail near-daily attacks by Boko Haram fighters.

# Archivist: IRS Didn't Follow Law With Emails

BY EILEEN SULLIVAN  
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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service did not follow the law when it failed to report the loss of records belonging to a senior IRS executive, the nation's top archivist told Congress on Tuesday, in the latest development in the congressional probe of the agency's targeting of conservative groups seeking tax-exempt status.

In June 2011, IRS executive Lois Lerner's computer crashed, resulting in the loss of records that are sought in investigations into the agency's actions. At the time, the agency tried to recover Lerner's records, but with no success.

When it was determined later in the summer of 2011 that the records on the hard drive were gone forever, the IRS should have notified the National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. Archivist David Ferriero told members of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. But Ferriero learned of the lost records on June 13 when the IRS notified Congress.

"Any agency is required to notify us when they realize they have a problem," Ferriero said.

Lerner is at the center of the controversy and has refused to answer questions from Congress, citing her Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate herself. In May, the House voted to hold Lerner in contempt of Congress. She retired from the IRS last fall after having been placed on paid leave.

In an effort to determine whether the Obama administration had any knowledge or involvement in the activities of the IRS division that reviews applications for tax-exempt status, lawmakers have sought and received thousands of IRS records — none of which has implicated the White House in the controversy. But when it was revealed that some of the emails sought were unrecoverable, Republicans questioned the timing of the hard drive crash, suggesting key records related to the investigation have conveniently gone missing.

IRS Commissioner John Koskinen has said that he has seen no evidence anyone committed a crime when the agency lost emails.

Pressed by a congressman Tuesday, Ferriero would not state that the IRS broke the law. He would only say that the agency didn't "follow" the

law, referring to the Federal Records Act.

In a rare evening hearing before the same committee on Monday, Koskinen said there was no evidence that Lerner intentionally destroyed the missing emails. To the contrary, he said, the IRS went to great lengths trying to retrieve lost documents on Lerner's computer, even sending it to the agency's forensic lab.

Republicans have said the Obama administration has not been cooperative with Congress' investigation.

"They've not only not fully cooperated, they haven't done a damn thing to help us get to the truth of what really happened," said House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio. "Lois Lerner refuses to tell us the truth, and then all of sudden, 'Oh my goodness, we lose two years' worth of emails.' Listen, I grew up in a bar. This doesn't pass the straight-face test."

Monday night, House Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, R-Calif., subpoenaed White House counsel Jennifer O'Connor to testify about her time at the IRS from May to November 2013. While at the IRS, O'Connor helped the agency gather documents related to the congressional investigation.

On Tuesday, when he ques-

tioned O'Connor, Issa called her a "hostile witness."

O'Connor disagreed. "I'm definitely not hostile," she said.

Later in the hearing, Issa said he consulted with another member who is a former prosecutor and the proper term to describe O'Connor was a "non-cooperative witness."

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the White House has been cooperating throughout the investigation.

"Our commitment to cooperating with legitimate congressional oversight and in some cases illegitimate congressional oversight is pretty well documented," Earnest said. Asked if the House Oversight and Government Reform committee's investigation was "illegitimate," Earnest said, "I'm saying that there are legitimate questions that can be raised about the partisan motivation of some of those who are conducting oversight in this circumstance."

The IRS was able to generate 24,000 Lerner emails from the 2009 to 2011 period because she had copied in other IRS employees. Overall, the IRS said it is producing a total of 67,000 emails to and from Lerner, covering the period from 2009 to 2013.

# 3-D Mammogram Scans May Find More Breast Cancer

BY LINDSEY TANNER  
AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO — 3-D mammograms may be better at finding cancer than regular scans, a large study suggests, although whether that means saving more lives isn't known.

The study involved almost half a million breast scans, with more than one-third of them using relatively new 3-D imaging along with conventional scans. The rest used regular mammograms alone.

The 3-D scan combo detected one additional cancer per 1,000 scans, compared with conventional digital mammograms. There were also 15 percent fewer false alarms — meaning fewer initially suspicious scan results

that additional testing showed wasn't cancer.

But the study wasn't designed to determine whether the combined 3-D scans resulted in better long-term outcomes, and the procedure studied has drawbacks including higher costs, less insurance coverage and more radiation, depending on the machine.

Still, the researchers say their results are promising and confirm benefits found in smaller, less diverse studies.

"The technology finds more invasive cancers earlier when they are easiest to treat and reduces unnecessary recalls for false alarms," said Dr. Donna Plecha, a co-author and director of breast imaging at University Hospi-

tals Case Medical Center in Cleveland.

Dr. Sarah Friedewald, the lead author and a radiologist at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, Illinois, said 3-D scans take only a few seconds longer and that patients notice no difference. She said she offers 3-D scans to all her patients.

The study was published Tuesday in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Standard mammograms typically take one image of each breast from two positions, while 3-D scans take several images of different layers of each breast. That allows for the detection of tumors that might be hidden under breast tissue and not noticeable on regular im-

ages, said Jim Culley, a spokesman for Hologic, which makes mammogram machines, including the combo ones used in the study that take both kinds.

The combined system costs up to about \$450,000, or as much as two times more than conventional mammogram machines, according to pricing information provided by MD Buyline, a technology research firm. 3-D scans also are less likely to be covered by insurance.

Hologic helped pay for the study and several authors including Plecha and Friedewald are Hologic consultants and members of the company's scientific advisory board.

A newer Hologic 3-D system uses about the same

amount of radiation as standard mammograms, while the equipment used in the study uses slightly more but still a safe amount, Culley said.

The researchers analyzed about two years of data from 13 centers as they switched from conventional mammograms to combined 3-D machines. Culley said doctors using Hologic scanners typically use both 3-D and standard imaging for each patient.

The detection rates were about four cancers per 1,000 conventional scans versus about five cancers per 1,000 combined 3-D scans.

Dr. Gilbert Welch, a professor of medicine at the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical

Practice in New Hampshire, said the extra radiation and costs are a concern, and the study can't tell women what they want to know — if 3-D technology saves lives.

Welch said the results are "likely to be overhyped, leading every hospital in the country to feel pressured to buy a new piece of expensive equipment and — to recoup their investment — pressure women to use it."

Robert Smith, senior director for cancer screening at the American Cancer Society, said the extra radiation risks of 3-D mammograms are likely more than offset by the advantage of finding more cancer, but he agreed that more long-term data and cost analyses are needed.